



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
Certification of Position Approval  
for Retirement  
Under 5 USC 8336(c) and 8412(d)

[ x ] Approved under the Civil Service Retirement System, 5 USC 8336(c)

[ x ] Approved under the Federal Employees Retirement System, 5 USC 8412(d)

Category of Coverage: Secondary-Administrative (Firefighter)

Bureau: Any DOI Bureau may use this PD and must use this DOI Standard PD Number\*

Classification Title: Range/Forestry Technician (Fire Dispatch)

Organization Title: Senior Fire Dispatcher

DOI Standard PD Number: DOI012\* Series and Grade: GS-455/462-06/07

\*This number should be entered in the employee's master records (FPPS) as last six spaces of Position Allocation Number.

RECOMMENDATION FOR COVERAGE: Secondary-Administrative Firefighter coverage is recommended under both CSRS and FERS.

This DOI Standard Position Description (SPD) is for a key fire management position located in the dispatch center of a fire management organization. The dispatch center is responsible primarily for wildland fire preparedness and suppression support activities, but may respond to all-risk incidents as needed or directed.

The INITIAL ATTACK LEAD DISPATCHER/ASSISTANT CENTER MANAGER requirements contained in the Interagency Fire Program Management Standards and Guide (IFPM) must be used in conjunction with this PD. These standards include minimum qualifications, training requirements, competencies, and key performance elements.

The primary purpose of this position is to serve as a fire dispatcher in support of fire suppression activities. Performs and directs others in receiving fire reports, determining location, land status, and current fire information. Determines appropriate resource response to incidents and requests from the field and dispatches personnel, equipment, aircraft, and/or supplies. Coordinates aviation dispatch operations. Based upon current wildland fire suppression activity and utilizing prior wildland firefighting experience, anticipates fire suppression needs and determines resource allocation. Operates and/or directs the operation of various dispatch telecommunication systems. **Prior wildland firefighting experience on the fireline, as gained by substantial service in a primary/rigorous firefighter position, or equivalent experience outside the Federal government is a MANDATORY PREREQUISITE to qualify for this position.**

JL Stees 11/21/03  
BIA Fire Program Designee Date

Sam M. Murphy 11/18/2003  
BLM Fire Program Designee Date

Phil Stees 11/18/2003  
FWS Fire Program Designee Date

Paul R. Boyler 11/18/03  
NPS Fire Program Designee Date

Marcia Scifres Acting 12/2/03  
MARCIA SCIFRES, DOI Fire & Law Enforcement Retirement Team Leader Date

APPROVAL: This DOI Standard Position Description (SPD) is approved for **SECONDARY-ADMINISTRATIVE Firefighter (FF)** Retirement coverage retroactive to classification date of 05/08/2003. Approval is by DOI Secretary's Designee:

Carolyn Cohen  
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Human Resources and Workforce Diversity

1/20/04  
Date

## **INTRODUCTION**

This position serves as a Senior Fire Dispatcher located in a dispatch center. This may be a single agency dispatch office that has a high program complexity or interagency dispatch center. The area involved may encompass federal, state, tribal and private lands within the dispatch center's area of influence. The center is responsible primarily for wildland fire preparedness, suppression support activities, but may respond to all-risk incidents as needed or directed.

The primary purpose of this position is to serve as a fire dispatcher in support of fire suppression activities.

**Prior wildland firefighting experience on the fireline is a mandatory requirement.**

This is a drug testing designated position.

## **DUTIES**

### Operations/Mobilization (55%)

Performs, and directs others, in receiving fire reports, determining location, land status, and current fire information.

Coordinates aviation dispatch operations (e.g., aircraft capabilities and limitations, flight planning, aviation safety).

Determines appropriate resource response to incidents and requests from the field and dispatches personnel, equipment, aircraft, and/or supplies.

Based upon current wildland fire suppression activity and utilizing prior wildland firefighting experience and training, anticipates fire suppression needs and determines resource allocation.

Operates and/or directs the operation of various dispatch telecommunication systems.

Organizes and reviews completed records of all orders placed and actions taken to ensure adherence to established operating procedures.

Processes and interprets weather information (e.g., spot weather forecasts, weather station observations, current and forecasted weather, lightning detection, and fuel moisture levels). This information is used to determine burning indices, preparedness levels and staffing levels for suppression and aviation resources.

Performs, and directs others, in inputting data into a number of fire-related computer applications (e.g., incident qualification records, fire reporting systems, and automated dispatch systems) and makes assessment of outputs.

Fire Program Management Support (45%)

Provides information and consults with cooperators and other interested entities.

Provides critical logistical support information to supervisor and makes recommendations concerning the efficient uses of available resources.

Records and maintains communication logs.

Coordinates and may assist with fire training and orientation.

Reviews internal operating procedures and systems, makes recommendations for improvement, and updates/develops operating plans and mobilization guides.

Provides assistance on problems encountered by lower level dispatch personnel.

Prior wildland firefighting experience on the fireline is mandatory.

Knowledge of fire management operations, dispatch procedures, and resources used for the tactical and logistical support for wildland and prescribed fire incidents (e.g., guidelines, initial attack, expanded dispatch, Incident Command System (ICS) terminology, resource qualification and capabilities).

Knowledge of the capabilities and limitations for a variety of suppression resources in order to determine the appropriate resource for a specific mission.

Knowledge of wildland fire suppression and prescribed fire strategies, tactics, methods and procedures, fire behavior, and weather conditions to effectively dispatch fire management resources, propose and update guidelines, issue internal instructions to other dispatchers, and resolve dispatch problems.

Skill in recognizing the effects of changing fire conditions to inform field personnel and agency administrators or Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group of critical information (e.g., fuels, resource availability, fire weather warnings and watches, fire behavior, and burning conditions).

Knowledge of fire operations and safety precautions sufficient to (1) determine appropriate fire management response and resource allocation (2) perform dispatch coordination functions with varying internal procedures, (3) develop information for special reports and briefings, (4) develop alternative strategies when competing units are requesting resources in short supply, (5) update and revise internal dispatch guidelines and procedures, and (6) locate additional sources for resources.

Knowledge of aircraft flight planning, including but not limited to scheduling flights, pilots and aircraft; duty limitations, ordering procedures, procurement and cost comparison analysis.

Knowledge of airspace designations and notification procedures for airspace coordination (i.e., Military Training Route (MTR), Military Operating Airspace (MOA), Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR), hazards).

Knowledge of fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft relating to fire and administrative operations in terms of capabilities, duty limitations, scheduling, flight following, incident or accident notification, and economics.

Knowledge of aviation safety, including airspace management, search, rescue and medivac procedures, incident reporting procedures, briefing and debriefing pilot, chief of party and passengers. and incident or accident notification.

Knowledge of wildland fire management computer programs and data output to solve data entry/retrieval problems, and develop operating guidelines and procedures.

Skill in interpreting topographical maps and aerial photos sufficient to determine incident location and prepare reports and briefings.

Ability to communicate orally and in writing in a clear and concise manner.

Ability to remain calm under urgent and frequently changing conditions.

Ability to provide on-the-job training.

Ability to organize and prioritize work.

## **FACTOR 2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS**

The supervisor assigns work, provides general instructions, and sets overall goals and standards of performance. Supervisor is available for consultation and advice on new or unusual aspects.

The employee independently plans and carries out the work handling problems in accordance with instructions, policies, previous training, or accepted practices. Makes recommendations on operating procedures.

Day to day work is reviewed through analysis of post activity, e.g., what has been achieved, appropriateness, and conformity to policies and procedures.

## **FACTOR 3. GUIDELINES**

Guidelines are found within agency and interagency manuals, handbooks, directives,

operating plans and policy statements of the agency(s) represented at the center.

The incumbent is expected to use sound judgment, creativity, innovation, and ingenuity in applying guidelines, and is permitted broad latitude for independent and innovative action due to the wide range of variables under which the work is accomplished. Each incident is different, and the requirements for safe, timely, cost effective and legal operations given the number and variety of situations encountered in carrying out assignments, requires the incumbent to adapt or extend guidelines or choose from among alternative procedures.

#### **FACTOR 4. COMPLEXITY**

The Center coordinates with multiple agencies (e.g., Federal, State, Tribal, and local) the movement of tactical and logistical resources in support of emergency incidents. The incumbent directs coordination efforts for multiple large incidents and new ignitions possibly occurring simultaneously in a variety of fuel types within a geographic area.

The employee analyzes specific situations encountered and selects the most appropriate course of action.

Threats to life, property, and natural resources are commonplace. The incumbent's decision-making is complicated by the number, size and locations of incidents requiring support, time constraints, priority, risks, availability of resources, and the expenditure of public funds.

#### **FACTOR 5. SCOPE AND EFFECT**

The work of the employee facilitates the prompt and safe execution of fire management activities in a dispatch center's area of operation. Duties and support functions have a significant impact on fire management operations and the efficiency of the program.

The center's work is critical to the safety of personnel, the public, and to the protection of resources.

#### **FACTOR 6. PERSONAL CONTACTS**

Personal contacts are made with all levels of cooperating land management and emergency support agencies. Primary contacts are with fire suppression personnel, resource specialists and other unit coordinators. Other personal contacts are with national and local news media, contractors, political officials, law enforcement personnel, and the general public.

Personal contacts are maintained with all levels of staffing in cooperating agencies, professional and technical organizations, private landowners, vendors, officials and providers of various types of equipment and services.

## **FACTOR 7. PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

The purpose of the contacts is primarily to exchange information, coordinate work efforts, reach agreement on current or proposed guidelines and regulations and to resolve questions of a complex nature. Contacts are also made to obtain interagency agreement to reduce or eliminate duplication of effort, to give or gain cooperation and to resolve conflicts. Contacts with national and local news media, contractors, political officials, law enforcement personnel and the public are primarily to exchange information.

## **FACTOR 8. PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The work involves long hours of sitting, intense concentration, and working at peak proficiency/intensity levels with irregular breaks and mealtimes. The duties of this position create a highly stressful environment during peak activity, requiring the ability to keep calm in emergency situations. Must be able to cope with the pressure of meeting timeframes and changing priorities. Mental concentration and accuracy are required.

## **FACTOR 9. WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Work is performed primarily in an office setting. During peak activity, increased radio traffic, numerous ringing phones, and conversations result in high noise levels, which require a high level of concentration to perform duties. This creates a high stress work environment.

## EVALUATION STATEMENT

<u>Recommended Classification</u>	Range/Forestry Technician (Fire Dispatch), GS-455/462-07
<u>Organizational Location:</u>	Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management
<u>References:</u>	Range Technician Series, GS-455 Dec 91 TS-111 Forestry Technician Series, GS-462 Dec 91 TS-111 Grade Evaluation Guide for Aid and Technician Work in the Biological Sciences, GS-400 Dec 91 TS-111

Background: This position serves as a Senior Fire Dispatcher located in a dispatch center in a fire management organization. This may be a single agency dispatch office that has a high program complexity or interagency dispatch center. The center is responsible primarily for wildland fire preparedness, suppression support activities, but may respond to all-risk incidents as needed or directed.

The primary purpose of this position is to perform, and direct others, in receiving fire reports, determining location, land status, and current fire information; coordinate aviation dispatch operations; and determine appropriate resource response to incidents and requests from the field. The employee also performs intelligence duties, reviews/updates internal operating procedures and systems, and provides orientation and training to other dispatchers.

The incumbent in this position spends more than 55% of the time in operations or mobilization related wildland fire dispatch functions. The remaining time is consumed with fire program management support.

The area involved may encompass federal, state, tribal, and private lands within the dispatch center's area of influence.

Determination of Series and Title: The Range/Forestry Technician, GS-455/462 series (TS-111, 12/91) cover positions that primarily require a practical knowledge of the methods and techniques of range/forestry and other biologically based resource management fields. Range/Forestry technicians provide practical technical support in the scientific management, protection, and development of rangeland and forest resources.

The GS-0081, Fire Protection and Prevention Series (TS-108, 9/91), states that positions that include fire control, suppression, and related duties incident to range/forestry management work should be classified to the Range/Forestry Technician Series. OPM has previously determined that firefighter positions are to be classified in the GS-455 or GS-462 series dependent upon the primary vegetation on the unit. The proper title and series are **Range Technician (Fire Dispatch), GS-455** or **Forestry Technician (Fire**

**Dispatch), GS-462** dependent upon type of terrain and vegetation. Since the only difference in the positions is the primary vegetation, the positions are considered interchangeable with either classification being appropriate.

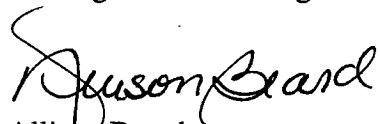
Because this position requires knowledge of wildland fire suppression and prescribed fire strategies, tactics, methods and procedures, fire behavior, and weather conditions to effectively dispatch fire management resources, the parenthetical title of **(Fire Dispatch)** is appropriate and is in line with agency practice.

The organizational title for this position is *Senior Fire Dispatcher*.

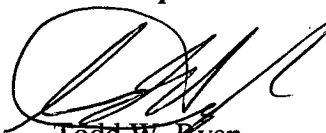
Determination of Grade: The Grade Level Guide for Aid and Technical Work in the Biological Sciences, GS-400, (TS-111, 12/91), which is in the FES format, is used to evaluate this position.

FACTOR EVALUATION SYSTEM POINTS RATINGS		
Evaluation Factors	Points	Level
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	550	1-4
2. Supervisory Controls	275	2-3
3. Guidelines	275	3-3
4. Complexity	150	4-3
5. Scope and Effect	150	5-3
6. Personal Contacts	75	2B
7. Purpose of Contacts		
8. Physical Demands	5	8-1
9. Work Environment	5	9-1
Total Points	1485	
Grade Conversion Range (1355-1600)	GS-07	

Conclusion: The proper title and series are **Range Technician (Fire Dispatch), GS-455-07** or **Forestry Technician (Fire Dispatch), GS-462-07** dependent upon type of terrain and vegetation. The organizational title is *Senior Fire Dispatcher*.



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